

REMARKS

Claims 2-6 and 8-10 are pending. Claims 2, 3, and 8 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found in the Specification as filed at least on page 2, lines 10-12; page 4, lines 27-34; page 5, lines 15-19, 25-31; and FIG. 3A. No new matter has been added. The rejections of the claims are respectfully traversed in light of the amendments and following remarks, and reconsideration is requested.

Drawings

Figure 2 is objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because it does not include certain reference signs mentioned in the description and also includes reference signs not mentioned in the description. Proposed drawing corrections to FIGS. 2 and 3A accompany this Response.

Claim Rejections

Claims 2-5 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Granneman et al. (WO 98/01890 hereinafter "Granneman"). Claims 5 and 9 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Granneman in view of Miyasaka (USPN 6,017,779). Claims 6 and 10 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Granneman in view of Zhao et al. (USPN 6,189,482 hereinafter "Zhao"). Applicant overcomes the rejections as follows.

Amended Claim 2 recites "a processing chamber heated by heating elements . . . a first plate positioned within said processing chamber . . . and a second plate disposed adjacent to said first plate, said first plate and said second plate provided between said heating elements and defining a processing area therebetween . . . said first emitted gas and said second emitted gas varying the temperature of said processing area."

Similarly, amended Claim 8 recites "a chamber heated by heating elements; and a first heatable plate and a second heatable plate positioned between said heating elements within said chamber, and defining a processing area therebetween."

Applicant's invention advantageously discloses gas-assisted rapid thermal processing in which "a significant conductive heat transfer component" is provided for processes (Specification, page 2, lines 10-11) in an environment where heat diffusing members absorb the thermal energy output from heating elements to distribute the heat evenly within the

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process chamber in addition to the conductive heat transfer component (Specification, page 4, lines 27-34; page 5, lines 15-24).

Applicant could not find any teaching or suggestion in the cited references, in particular Granneman, Miyasaka, and Zhao, alone or in combination, of such a configuration. Instead, the cited references disclose the use of heating gases alone.

Claims 3-6 and 9-10 are dependent on Claims 2 and 8, respectively, and contain additional limitations that further distinguish them from Granneman, Miyasaka, and Zhao, alone or in combination. Therefore, Claims 3-6 and 9-10 are patentable over Granneman, Miyasaka, or Zhao, alone or in combination, for at least the same reasons provided above for Claims 2 and 8, respectively.

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CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, pending Claims 2-6 and 8-10 are now in condition for allowance and allowance of the Application is hereby solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, the Examiner is hereby requested to telephone Applicant's Attorney at (949) 752-7040.

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Respectfully submitted,



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